



THE DURANGO KID vs. THE FIRST ATOMIC WEAPON!

CHARLES STARRETT *as*

The DURANGO KID

No. 7

10¢





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CHARLES STARRETT in a trick photograph shakes hands with his other self – THE DURANGO KID!

THE DURANGO KID

STOP! ONE MORE STEP, DURANGO—AND ALL THAT'LL BE LEFT OF YOU WILL BE ATOMIZED SMOKE!

GULP! AN' THAT THERE CONTRAPTION KIN DO IT, TOO!

THIS MONSTER GENIUS WAS ONE HUNDRED YEARS AHEAD OF HIS TIME! HIS DEATH-MAD SCIENCE PRODUCED A WEAPON MORE BRUTAL, MORE HORRIBLE, THAN ANY THE WORLD HAD EVER SEEN! WITH IT, HE WAS MASTER OF THE EARTH! AND THE DURANGO KID NEVER FACED A CLEVERER ENEMY THAN "THE BOSS" OR A DEADLIER WEAPON THAN — "THE RAY OF HORROR!"

STEVIE, EVER SINCE THEM BUILDERS CAME FROM TH' CITY AN' PUT UP THET PE-COOJAR LOOKIN' BUILDIN', I BEEN ITCHIN' TUH SEE WHUT'S IN IT...

CAIN'T BE A RANCH, 'CAUSE THAR AIN'T NO CATTLE 'ROUND, NO CORRALS, NUTHIN'!

NOTHING EXCEPT "KEEP OUT" SIGNS AND GUARDS. THE OWNER, WHOEVER HE IS, MUST WANT PRIVACY!

THE DURANGO KID



THE DURANGO KID

LATER, INSIDE THE GROUNDS OF THE MYSTERIOUS RANCH...

FOOLS! I'VE HIRED A BUNCH OF FOOLS! YOU CAN'T EVEN STEAL A STEER WITHOUT MESSING IT UP! NOW, LISTEN TO ME—I WANT A STEER TONIGHT! I **MUST HAVE A LIVE STEER!**

YEAH, BOSS—SURE, BOSS—YOU'RE RIGHT, BOSS—!



NOW, GET OUT OF HERE AND DON'T COME BACK WITHOUT THAT STEER! I MUST GO BACK AND DO SOME MORE WORK IN MY LABORATORY NOW. GO!

WE'RE GOIN', BOSS!



THEY ARE FOOLS—ONLY I AM A GENIUS! AH, MY BEAUTIFUL LABORATORY! MY IDEA IS SO SECRET AND SO DANGEROUS THAT I HAD TO BUILD IT WAY OUT IN THIS WILDERNESS SO NO ONE COULD SPY OR INTERFERE...



AH YES! I KNEW THIS NEW-FANGLED ELECTRICITY COULD BE USED FOR OTHER THINGS BESIDE TELEGRAPH MESSAGES! I FELT THAT IF I COULD CONCENTRATE POWER ON URIDIUM, A NEW ELEMENT I DISCOVERED—



—AND IF I COULD FIND A WAY TO FOCUS THE ATOMIZATION THAT WOULD RESULT—THEN I KNEW I COULD PRODUCE A **DEATH RAY** WHICH MIGHT ATOMIZE ANYTHING IT SHONE ON!



AH YES! IT WORKS ON **STEEL**! IT WORKS ON **WOOD**! BUT—THE BIG QUESTION IS...



...WILL IT WORK ON **LIVING FLESH**? THAT IS WHY I NEED A LIVE STEER TONIGHT—TO FINISH THE EXPERIMENT! HA-HA-HA-HA-HA! I AM A HUNDRED YEARS AHEAD OF THE REST OF THE SCIENTIFIC WORLD! HA-HA-HA-HA-HA!



THE DURANGO KID

LATE THAT NIGHT... "THE BOSS'S" MEN FINALLY BRING IN A STOLEN STEER—BUT KEEN EYES WATCH THEM!

THEY'RE TAKING IT INTO THE MYSTERY RANCH ALL RIGHT! SOMEHOW, WE'VE GOT TO GET PAST THAT GATE. LISTEN CLOSELY NOW, MULEY...

I'M LISTENIN', DURANGO!

THAT'S A FUNNY NOISE IN THEM BUSHES! WE BETTER TAKE A LOOK—SEE, RUDY!

RIGHT—THE BOSS SURE CAN'T SAY WE AIN'T ON OUR TOES!

HE SURE CAN'T RUDY—BUT GUESS WHO'S ON YOUR HEADS!

OKAY, DURANGO—HYAR'S THUH ROPE TUH TIE 'EM UP WITH!

GUNNING!

MAKE A BREAK FOR THOSE BUSHES, MULEY, I'LL COVER YOU AND FOLLOW.

RIGHT, DURANGO!

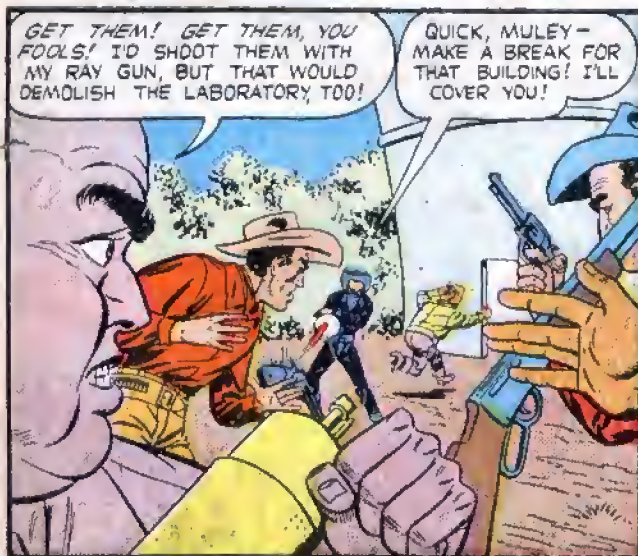
HERE GOES! THE LAST AND FINAL TEST! IF IT SHOULD WORK—HA, IF IT SHOULD WORK—!

IT WORKS! IT WORKS! I AM MASTER OF THE WORLD! HA-HA-HA!

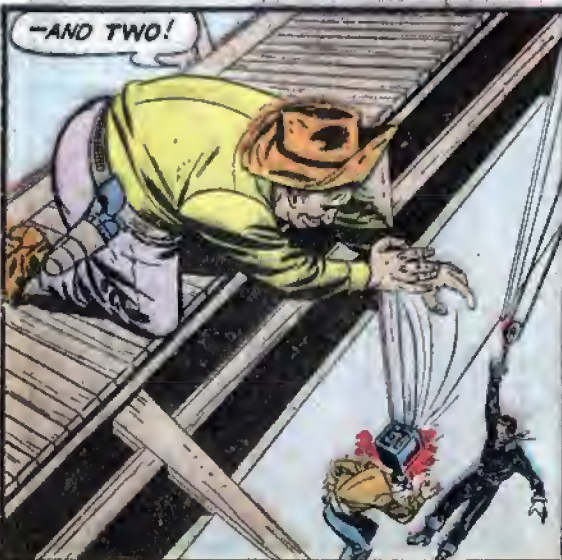
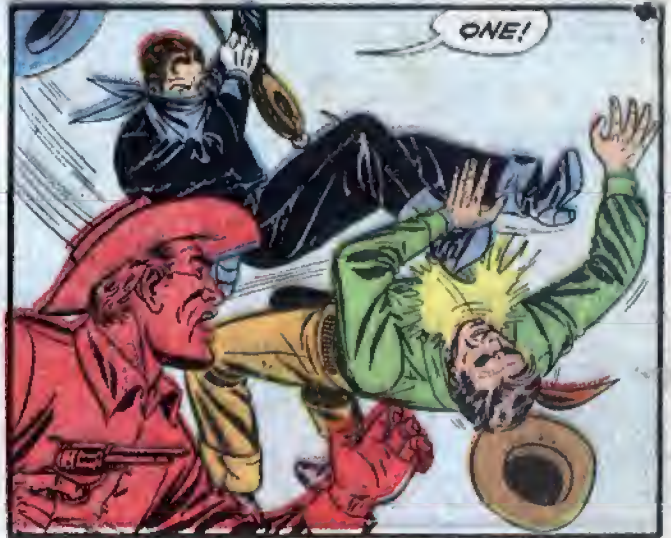
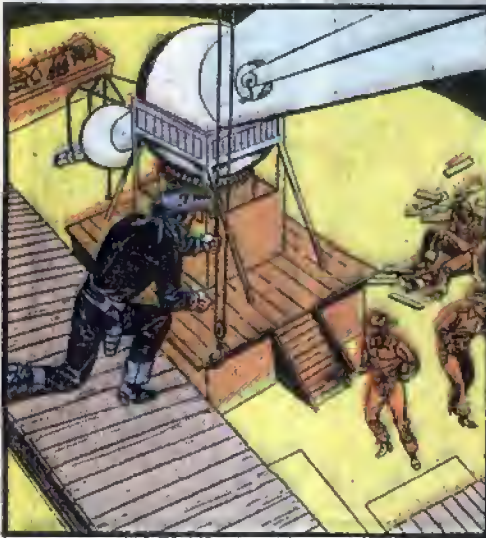
DID YUH SEE WHUT I SEEN? THEE STEER TEST PLAIN—GULP—DIS-APPEARED! AIN'T NOTHIN' LEFT BUT SMOKE AN' ASHES! YIPE!

I DON'T KNOW HOW IT WORKS, MULEY—BUT I DO KNOW WHAT IT MEANS. SUCH A WEAPON IN THE HANDS OF A MADMAN LIKE THAT IS A THREAT TO ALL HUMANITY!

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THE DURANGO KID

THIS WAY—AWAY FROM THE DOOR SIDE, WE'LL GET AROUND THE BUSHES AND TRY TO GRAB HIM FROM BEHIND. IF ONLY HE'D DROP THAT RAY GUN FOR A MINUTE!



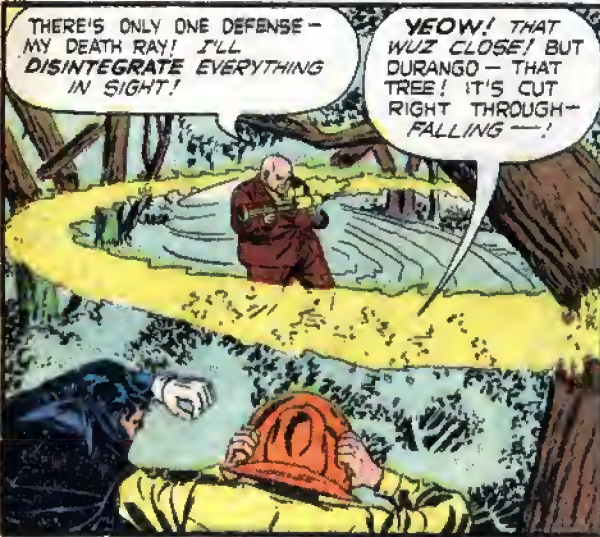
BUT "THE BOSS" HAS NO INTENTION OF EVER LETTING HIS RAY GUN GET AWAY FROM HIM.

I SAW THEM COME OUT OF THE TOP, JUST FOR A MINUTE! SOMETHING HAPPENED TO ALL MY MEN IN THERE—I'M ALL ALONE WITH THOSE SPIES! THEY'LL TRY TO JUMP ME ANY SECOND NOW!



THERE'S ONLY ONE DEFENSE—MY DEATH RAY! I'LL DISINTEGRATE EVERYTHING IN SIGHT!

YEOW! THAT WUZ CLOSE! BUT DURANGO—THAT TREE! IT'S CUT RIGHT THROUGH—FALLING—!



AH! I'VE UNCOVERED THE SPY! JUST ONE SPRAY OF THIS GUN AND THERE'LL BE NOTHING LEFT OF HIM BUT ATOMIZED SMOKE!



NO! YUH GOTTA KILL ME FUST!

THUNDER! MY GUN!



The DURANGO KID

AN HONEST NEWSPAPER WAS OFTEN THE BEST GUARANTEE OF LAW AND ORDER IN THE WEST—AND ED SMALL, OWNER OF THE BIG FORK GAZETTE, WAS AN HONEST AND FEARLESS EDITOR! WHEN AN HONEST MAN MEETS A CROOK—THERE'S A FIGHT! THE DURANGO KID FOUND FIGHT A-PLenty—WITH MURDER AND ARSON TO BOOT—WHEN ED SMALL'S PAPER MET THE—

"Deadline FOR MURDER!"



THERE'S NO WAY OUT, STEVIE—WE'LL BE TRAMPLED TO DEATH! S-S-S-50 LONG, P-P-PAL!



WAL, STEVIE—HYAR SHE IS—BIG FORK! WONDER EF THUH CHIEF KNEW THAT WUZ A ELECTION GOIN' ON WHEN HE SENT US HYAR?

THAT DOESN'T CONCERN US, MULEY. WE'RE HERE TO INVESTIGATE A RASH OF RUSTLING!

BENDIX FOR SHERIFF!! VOTE TOMORROW!

BENDIX YOUR CHOICE FOR SHERIFF!!

VOT FOR BENDIX

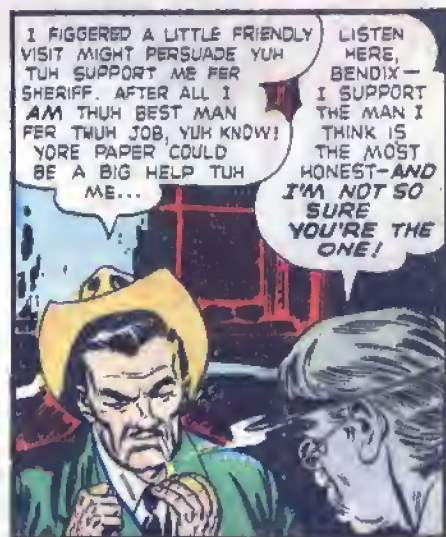
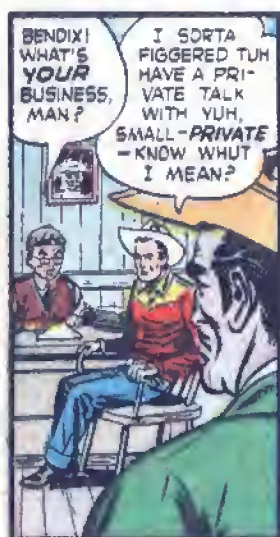


AND WE'VE GOT TO DO IT UNDERCOVER! THE CHIEF DOESN'T WANT IT KNOWN IN THESE PARTS THAT I'M A FEDERAL MARSHAL. BUT WE'RE IN LUCK—IF THERE'S ANYBODY WHO'LL KNOW WHAT GOES ON IN THE TOWN. IT'S THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER EDITOR...

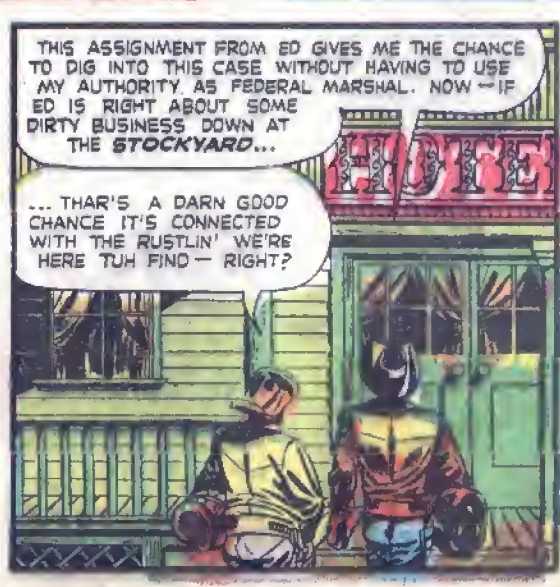
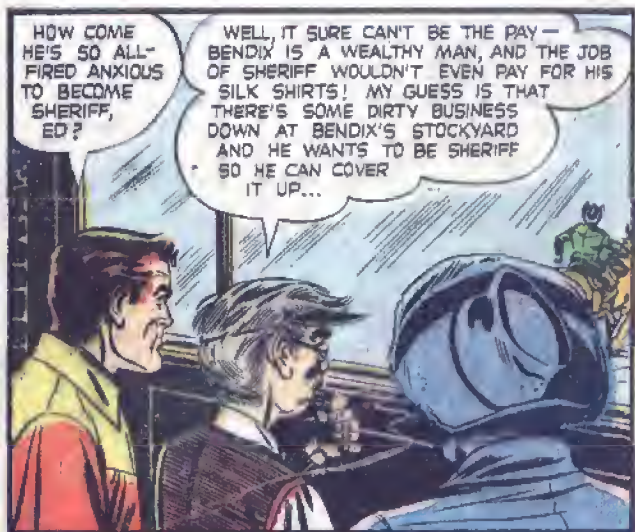
...AND ED SMALL IS AN OLD PAL OF OURS!

BIG FORK GAZETTE

THE DURANGO KID



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THAT NIGHT—AT THE BENDIX STOCKYARDS...

THEY SHORE GOT THIS STOCKYARD A LONG WAYS FROM TOWN!

THEY'RE MOVING A HERD OF CATTLE INTO THE YARD RIGHT NOW—IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT! THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THAT HERD THEY WANT TO HIDE—AND WE'RE GOING TO FIND OUT WHAT IT IS!

INSIDE THE STOCKYARD...

THAR SHE IS, BENDIX—THUH HERD! RUSTLED IT OFF HEAD BY HEAD AN' BELIEVE YOU ME, I SHORE TOOK MUH PICK O' THE BEST!

GOOD WORK, LEFTY—I'LL PAY YUH PLENTY FER THIS JOB. BUT WE GOT TUH ACT FAST NOW...

...AND GIT THIS BRANDBLOTTIN' JOB OVER BEFORE MORNIN'! MY BOYS'LL FIX THEM BRANDS SO NOBODY KIN TELL WHO THEY BELONGED TO!

...FOUR HUNDRED...FIVE HUNDRED... WHY THE CHEAP SO-AN-SO! PAY ME PLENTY, HE SAYS!

DAWG-ONE MUH CLUMSY FEET—TRIPPED OVER THET BRANDIN' IRON!

WOT WUZ THET?

SNOOPERS! LET'S GIT 'EM!

RUN, MULEY! WE'RE NOT LOOKING FOR A FIGHT YET—WE'RE UNDERCOVER! RUN!

!?!*#??
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CLANK!

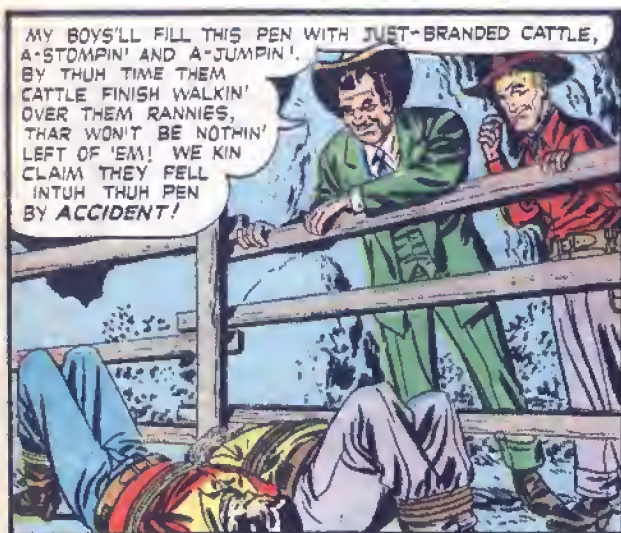
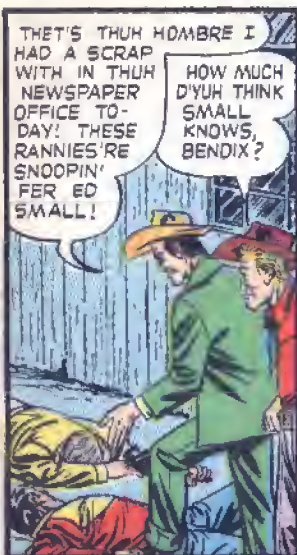
I'M COMIN' AS FAST AS I—
ARGHHH!

MULEY!

MULEY! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? MULEY, SPEAK TO ME—
UGH!

GOT 'IM!

THE DURANGO KID



THE DURANGO KID

MEANWHILE, IN THE PEN...

MULEY! MULEY! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

RECKON SO—THET BULLET JEST GRAZED ME AN' KONKED ME DUT! WHUT A CLUMSY SATCHEL-FOOTED DOPE I AM!

HOLY SMOKE—THEY'RE FILLIN' THIS PEN WITH CATTLE, SCARED CATTLE—JEST BRANDED! GOSH—EF WE COULD ONLY STAND UP! WE'RE GOIN' TO 'GIT TRAMPLED, STEVE!

THEY FORGOT THAT BRANDING IRON...IT'S STILL RED HOT...IF ONLY I CAN REACH IT IN TIME... THE CATTLE WILL SCREEN US...

THEY'RE STAYIN' AWAY FROM US SO FAR— BUT WHEN IT GITS MORE CROWDED IN HERE, THEY'LL—I THINK I'M GITTIN' SKEERED, STEVIE!

THERE! NOW—THIS MAY BURN, BUT...

MADE IT!

HURRY, STEVE—HURRY! WE'RE IN THUH LAST SQUARE FOOT O' FREE SPACE LEFT IN THIS HERE PEN!

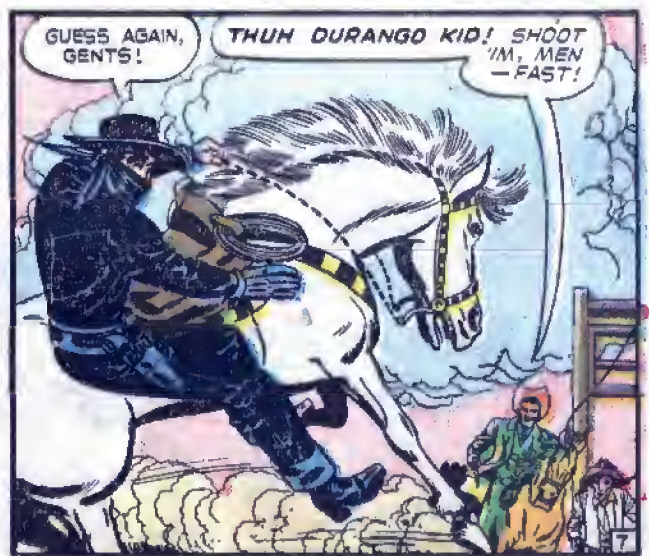
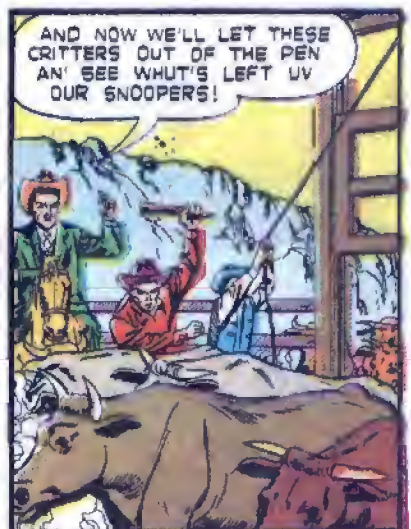
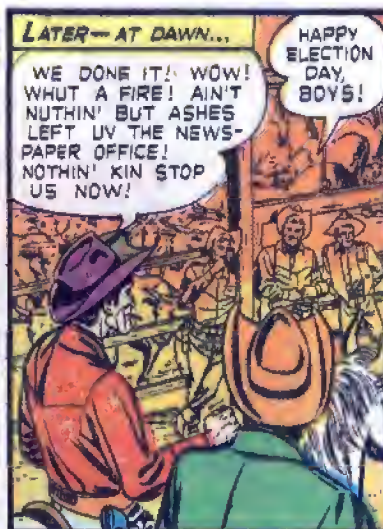
DID IT! WHEW!

WE'RE STAND-ING NOW AND CAN MOVE AROUND—IT'LL BE ALL RIGHT, MULEY!

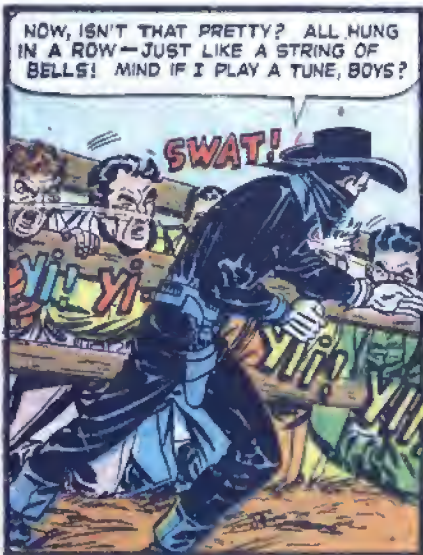
AND NOW LET'S GET OUT OF HERE—THIS WAY, MULEY—AND KEEP YOUR HEAD LOW. GRAB MY HAND AND I'LL PULL!

MOVE OVER, YUH DUMB CRITTER! DAW-GONE, THEY'RE SO TIGHT IN HYAR I CAIN'T BREATHE!

THE DURANGO .



THE DURANGO KID



the End

Dan Brand and Tipi

WHEN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION EXPLODED ITS SHOT HEARD 'ROUND THE WORLD, THE STAUNCH MEN OF THE FRONTIER, FED UP WITH THE TYRANNY OF THE KING AND HIS GOVERNORS, RALLIED TO THE CAUSE. FIGHTERS LIKE DAN BRAND AND HIS INDIAN FRIEND, TIFI, WERE IMPORTANT LEADERS IN THE GUERRILLA WARFARE OF THE WILDS. IT'S EASY TO KNOW WHY, WHEN YOU READ:

"THE BATTLE OF THE DUNGEONS!"

ONWARD, REBELS!
DOWN WITH TYRANNY!



T. RAZZ TA..

1773! TWO YEARS BEFORE THE REVOLUTION!
A FRONTIER OUTPOST...

THERE'S THE HOUSE, LIEUTENANT! GEORGE FRANKLIN AND A BAND OF FRONTIER REBELS ARE IN THERE, PLOTTING REVOLT AGAINST THE CROWN! I'M AN AMERICAN, TOO—BUT I DON'T HOLD WITH THESE MOTLEY REBELS—KNOW WHAT I MEAN?

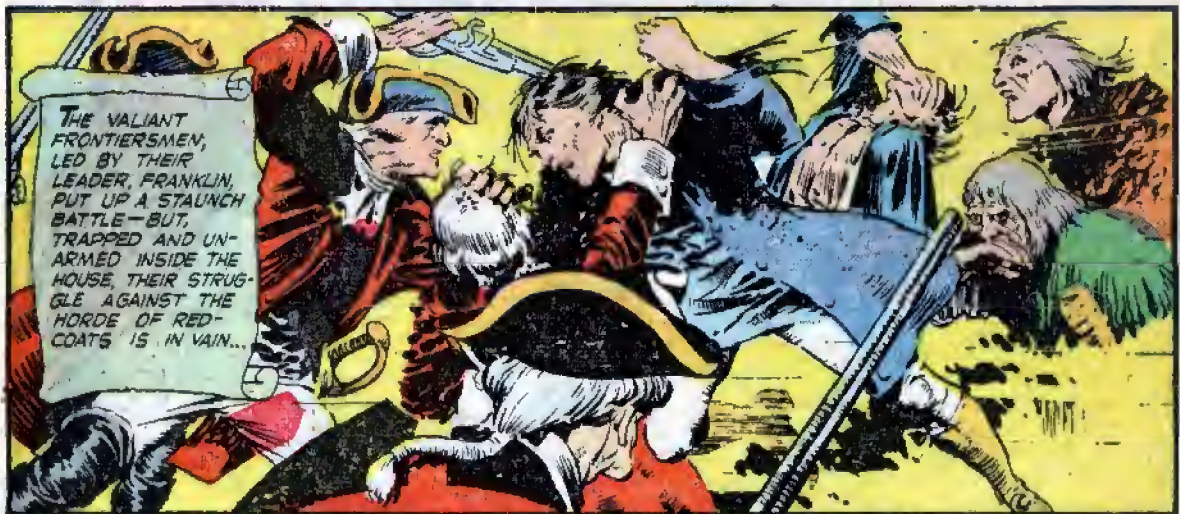
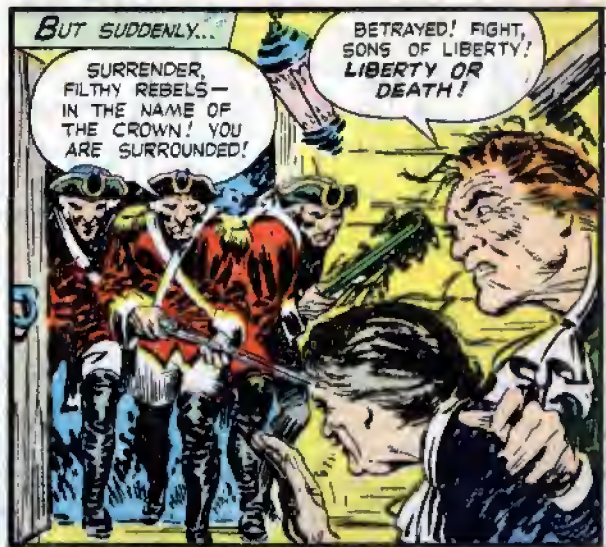


YES, BLEEKER—I RAWTHER KNOW JUST WHAT YOU MEAN! WILL THIS BE ENOUGH? THE GOVERNOR SAID TO PAY YOU WELL!

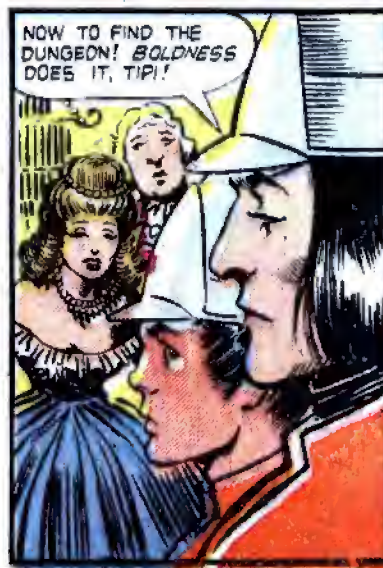
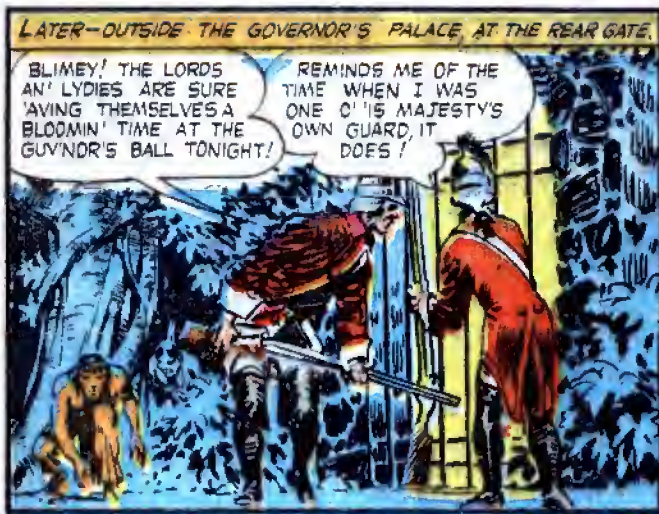
WELL—AHM! I'M JUST DOING THIS OUT OF—ER—PATRIOTISM TO HIS MAJESTY, YOU KNOW—BUT THIS MONEY CERTAINLY WILL COME IN HANDY—HARUMPH!



THE DURANGO KID



THE DURANGO KID



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THE DURANGO KID



THE DURANGO KID



THE brown and white steer lay helpless as the red-hot brand swooped down on its flank. Deftly, the man with the tiny scar on his jaw made three moves with the straight iron, changing the KT brand into the Laddered Diamond. He studied his work for a moment, nodded his satisfaction, and was rising to his feet when the .44-40 bullet dug a hole between his spurred boots.

The man swore and dove for his pony. He could see the rifleman with the smoking rifle running across the hogback ridge, framed against the blue sky as he lifted his rifle and threw it to his shoulder. The man dropped the brand and clawed frantically at his Colt. The sharpshooter fired again. The man who had been changing brands opened his eyes and clung desperately to a slowly widening red stain on his blue shirt. He toppled backwards.

Ken Talley came forward carefully, automatically ejecting a shell from the chamber, levering another shell into the barrel. His tanned face was hard, set in flat planes in which his blue eyes burned like sapphire flame.

"Caught one of 'em at last," he said through tight lips.

He came to stand over the fallen man. Many men ran straight irons out where the grassy plains of the Feather River range stretched between the big black bluffs of the Mogul Rim and the cold, fast-flowing waters of the Feather. But this was the first time young Ken Talley had caught a man with the iron in his hand.

He turned the man over and grunted when he saw his face. "Ben Kimmel! One of Draw Deegan's boys!"

Talley blinked carefully against the breeze that stirred the grama grass. Draw Deegan was a power in the Rim. He had two guns, and he knew how to use them. A small rancher like Ken Talley could not hope to stand against him or the bunch that rode under his Crosspatch brand. If he should complain to Deegan, Deegan would find a way to make him go for his gun. And Talley knew he was no match for the gunman with Colts in his hands!

Talley cut the steer free, studying the Laddered Diamond. *Deegan's too smart to use his*

own brand, he thought. But somewhere in the breaks north of the Mogul Rim, he probably has a Laddered Diamond herd, all set to move! As he went across the rolling grassland, head down, Talley took up in his mind the brands of his neighbors: Luke Parker's Three T brand, Monk Groome's T Diamond. All those brands, including his own KT brand, could easily be changed into Deegan's Laddered Diamond mark.

He moved up into his fifty-dollar Cheyenne saddle and toed his little pinto to a run. He could not fight Deegan and his gunslicks—but he was not going to sit by and let Deegan run off his steers and eventually force him off his ranch!

Talley was in the general store in Hardknot the next morning when the trouble broke. As Talley put his arms around the big box of groceries, the voice came from the doorway. It was a cold voice, hard and grim, colored with a sneer.

"We found Kimmel early this morning, Talley. Somebody shot him. We saw your pony's tracks all around. We figured you'd know about it."

Talley turned slowly. One hand was tightly clenched. He felt his eyes drawn to the tightly smiling face of the man in the doorway. It was big Herb Looover standing there—almost as good a man with a Colt as Deegan.

"I know about him. I caught him running a straight iron on my stock. I shot him."

Looover looked at him coldly, for a long moment, then swung on his heel and walked away. Talley felt his knees turned rubbery for a moment as he leaned against the bare wooden counter. He lifted his neckerchief to his face and wiped it.

The store clerk came up from behind the heavy wooden counter, his cheeks white. He said, "I was afeared Herb was a-goin' for his six then."

"So was I. But he didn't."

"He will. You ride for home. I'll send the rest of the things out your way by wagon."

"Yeah. Mebbe I will."

He walked out of the store, conscious of the Colt bobbing on his right thigh, a heavy weight shifting as he strode. Instantly, as the

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hot sunlight touched his cheeks, he knew he was marked for death. Herb Looover was across the street, by the hitch-rail. He was lounging there carelessly—too carelessly. Twenty feet the other side of him was Draw Deegan, standing motionless under the wooden overhang of the blacksmith's shop. The two fastest gunmen in the Rim country, looking at him with their cold, merciless eyes. He was in the way of the Crosspatch bunch. He would be stamped out. Here. Now. Today.

Talley walked at an angle across the street. He had no chance, but he would not run. If he could get where he wanted—
"Talley!"

The word struck him like a whiplash. He jerked his head around and looked at Draw Deegan, but he kept walking across the dusty street.

Deegan snarled, "Stand still, Talley! I'm talking 'to yuh!'"

Talley quartered still more across the street until he was less than ten feet from the hitch-rail. Now he stopped and faced Deegan. He licked his lips and ran his palms on the rough blue wool of his shirt. He said, "I'm still. I'm looking for no trouble with the Crosspatch."

"Too late for that, Talley. When one of my boys goes down, I find out why."

"He was running a straight iron."

"We didn't see a straight iron," Deegan said coldly.

Talley shrugged. He wondered idly if he would gain anything by starting this. Here and there a face peered from a window, or from around the corner of a building, at the three men. They were frightened faces, all of them, knowing Draw Deegan's ruthlessness and kill-hunger.

Deegan spoke to his big foreman. "Herb, I don't hold with murder. The sheriff's out of town. If we wait for him, this sidewinder may get away."

Herb chuckled coldly, "I'll back yore play, boss."

Deegan shifted his feet, about to change his position.

Talley went for his gun. He lifted it and whirled, throwing himself face down in the dust of the street. He heard guns belch thunder, heard a man grunt heavily, heard the dull thud of a falling body.

Herb Looover was lying in the dusty street, unmoving. A smoking gun was close to his motionless right hand.

"Blast yuh, Talley!" gritted a voice.

Ken Talley whirled. He could see Draw Deegan backing away, one hand clamped over his bleeding shoulder. Deegan was white with pain and rage. He cursed and swore at Talley as he backed away.

Deegan rasped, "I'll be back. I'll skin yuh and nail yore hide to a bar-room wall, Talley! That was a low-down trick—"

Talley laughed and got to his knees. He had deliberately stationed himself between Deegan and Looover, directly in their line of fire. He had no chance against them. They were so fast they could shoot him down before he could touch his own gun. But he had counted on that speed, on that instinctive draw-and-shoot motion that was the mark of the true gunslick. Deegan had gone for his gun and fired, all in one movement. So had Looover. Only — he, Talley, had fallen flat on his face — and Deegan had put a .45 calibre Colt bullet in Looover's heart, killing him instantly. Looover had hit Deegan in the shoulder.

Talley said, "Now it's your turn, Deegan. Stand still!"

Deegan froze. He looked carefully at the hard-faced Talley. He tried a laugh, saying, "It was Looover's fault, Talley. He was hot for gunplay. I figured mebbe Kimmel was running his own brand —"

"Button that lip, Deegan. It won't work. We're all wise to you, in the Rim country. Only trouble has always been, you were too strong for us. Now mebbe the odds are even."

Talley lifted his Colt and trained it on Deegan's chest. The blood receded from the gunslick's face. Deegan shouted hoarsely, "Talley! Man, yuh wouldn't shoot me in cold blood?" People were coming from the houses and the saloons and the stores, now. A man shouted encouragement to the KT man. Several women shouted advice. Deegan caught the sullen fury and resentment in their voices.

Talley said, "You got a gun. Lift it! When we can't miss, we'll shoot. You'll kill me! I'll kill you! Well — what's the matter? You wanted to kill me. You got the chance. Only thing is, now — I'll take you with me."

"No. No!"

Deegan threw down his gun. There was fright in his face, and in his protruding eyes. He shouted, "I won't do it. I —"

The people surged around him. Talley pushed them back. He laughed. "I always did think you gunslicks had no more craw than a jackrabbit! Let's go into the sheriff's office, Deegan. I'm going to write something on a paper, and you're goin' to sign it."

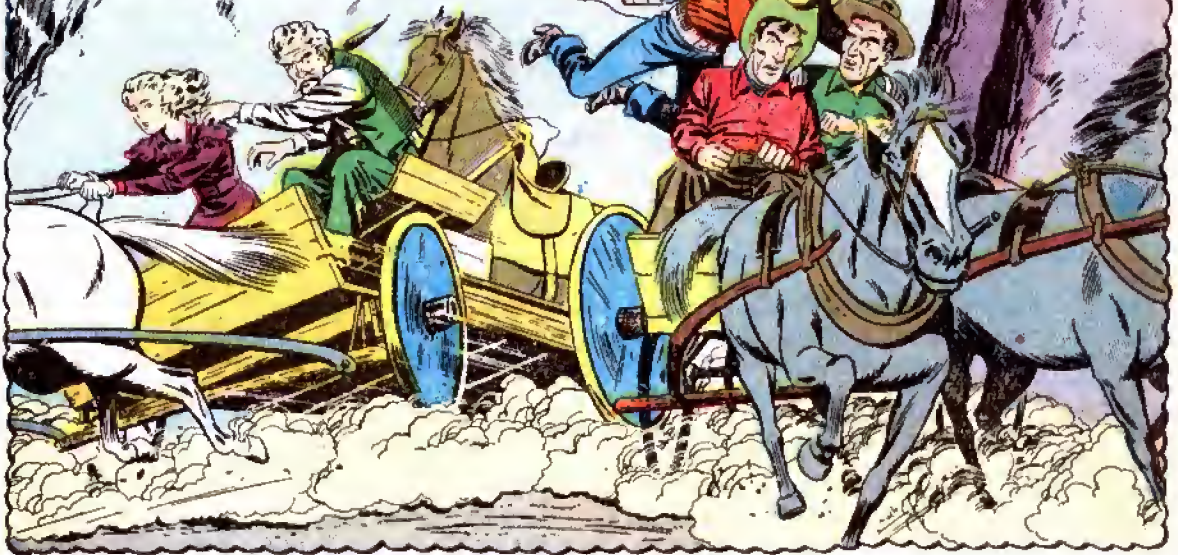
Deegan nodded. His chin fell forward on his chest as he moved through the people and the hot sunlight toward the cool sheriff's office. Looking at him, Talley felt a twinge of sympathy. Deegan was a broken man. He would be dangerous no longer. Someone had looked him in the eye and called his bluff.

Talley sighed as he watched Deegan walk ahead of him. He lifted his head and drew warm, good air deep into his lungs. It wasn't always the man with the fastest gun-hand who won the fight. Sometimes a man could win who could just hold a gun and look death straight in the eye — and challenge him!

— THE END —

THE DURANGO KID

FROM TIME TO TIME THE GOVERNMENT DECLARED VAST AREAS OF WESTERN LAND OPEN TO WHOEVER WANTED IT ALL "SQUATTERS" WERE CLEARED OFF AND THE FUTURE FARMERS OF THE WEST LINED UP AT THE POST TO AWAIT THE SIGNAL TO GO. THEN—THE RACE FOR LAND WAS ON! THE PRIZE BELONGED TO THE SWIFTEST, THE MOST DARING—AND, SOMETIMES, TO THE MOST UNSCRUPULOUS! IT WAS A DANGEROUS, DEATH-RIDDEN, PASSION-HAUNTED GAME TO GET THERE FIRST IN—
"THE GREAT LAND RUSH!"



THE STARTING LINE OF THE GREAT RUSH!

FIFTEEN MINUTES TO GO! I GUESS WE'RE ALMOST READY—THE FEDERAL MARSHALS HAVE CLEARED THE AREA OF ALL SQUATTERS.



BUT AT ONE END OF THE STARTING LINE, A GROUP OF "SQUATTERS" TALK SULLENLY AMONG THEMSELVES...

THET GUV'MENT VARMINT KICKED US RIGHT OFF! THET HUNK O' LAND DOWN AT THUH FORK OF APACHE CREEK! BLAST 'IM!

AN' THET'S WHAR WE BURIED OUR LOOT FROM OUR LAST BANK ROBBERY! DOG-GONE, WE'RE IN A REAL FIX IF SOMEBODY ELSE GITS THAR AFORE WE DO, BOOGER!



THE DURANGO KID

AIN'T **NOBODY** GOIN' TUH GIT THAR AFORE WE DO! AN' I DOAN CARE EF WE HAVE TUH KILL A FEW O' THESE CRITTERS TUH SEE TUH IT! UNDERSTAND?

WE UNDERSTAND!

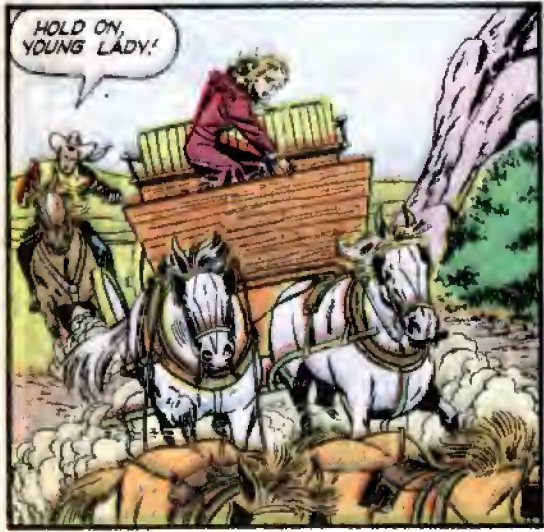
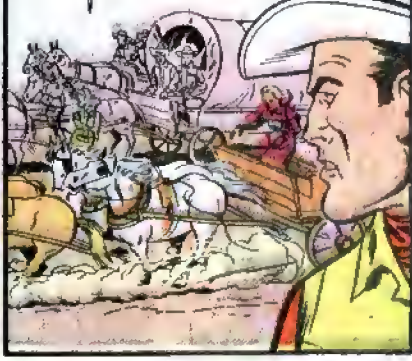
BUT—AT THE SAME PART OF THE STARTING LINE IS STEVE BRAND, FEDERAL MARSHAL, AND HIS SIDEKICK, MULEY PIKE.

GOLLEY, STEVE! SURE IS, MULEY, BUT NOW AIN'T TRET AN EXCITIN' SIGHT? SURE IS, MULEY, BUT KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED FOR OTHER THINGS, TOO. WE'RE ON ASSIGNMENT HERE TO WATCH OUT FOR DIRTY PLAY.

OVERCOME BY THE EXCITEMENT, A HORSE TEAM SUDDENLY GETS "SPOOKED"!

MADGE! HONEY, GRAB THEM REINS!

I CAN'T, POP — THEY'RE **BROKEN!** ...OH! **HELP! HELP!**



HOLD ON, YOUNG LADY!



HERE GOES! I SURE DON'T LIKE TO DO **THIS** TOO OFTEN...ONE SLIP AND...



THERE WE ARE! EASY THERE, BRONC—EASY! THAT'S THE BOY— NOTHING TO BE SCARED OF...

THAT WAS MAGNIFICENT RIDING, STRANGER! THANKS A LOT! IN ANOTHER SECOND THEY WOULD HAVE TURNED THIS BUCKBOARD OVER!



AND HERE WE GO—RIGHT BACK TO THE STARTING LINE. YOU JUST ALMOST LOST A DAUGHTER, POP!

BUT THANKS TO YOU, I DIDN'T! YOUNG FELLER, BENSON'S MY NAME AN' I'M SURE RIGHT GRATEFUL TUH YUH. THET WUZ SLICK RIDIN'!

THE DURANGO KID

WE'RE SHORE COUNTIN' ON GITTIN' OURSELVES A GOOD PIECE O' LAND SO WE KIN BRING MA OUT WEST. YUH SEE—MA'S SICK AN' WE'RE FIGGERIN' THUH LIFE OUT HYAR WILL BRING HER BACK TUH HEALTH...

YUP, THAR'S A SWEET PASSEL O' LAND THET I ONCE PASSED MANY YEARS AGO WHEN I WUZ A SOLDIER AN' THET I ALWAYS HANKERED FER. IT'S RIGHT AT THUH FORK O' APACHE CREEK—AN' THET'S THE SPOT I'M RACIN' FER!

WELL, I SURE WISH YUH LUCK, POP!

THE JUDGE IS READY! THET STARTIN' SIGNAL'S GOIN' TUM GO OFF ANY MINUTE NOW!

SO YUH WANT TUM GIT TUM APACHE CREEK, HUH? SORRY, POP—WE GOT **DIFFERENT** IDEAS ABOUT THET PIECE O' LAND!

BANG!

POP! THOSE MEN! THEY'RE TRYING TO **HOOK** US!

TARNATION!... YUH VARMINTS, STEER AWAY! **STEER AWAY!** YUH'RE GOIN' TUM TEAR OFF OUR WHEEL!

H-HOOORAY

THET'S JIST WHUT WE AIM TUM DO, GEEZER!

MADGE! HONEY, ARE YUH HURT? THEM DIRTY VARMINTS!

THAT WAS AS ^BROTTEN A TRICK AS I'VE EVER SEEN!

THE DURANGO KID



ALL RIGHT, YOU RATS — PULL UP!



GET A MOVE ON, MISTER! YOU'RE GOING RIGHT BACK THERE AND SWITCH WAGONS WITH THOSE PEOPLE YOU PLAYED THAT ROTTEN TRICK ON!



ALL RIGHT, POP — TAKE OFF! MULEY AND I WILL COME WITH YOU A WAYS, JUST TO SEE THERE'S NO MORE FUNNY BUSINESS PULLED... AS FOR YOU COYOTES — YOU GOT WHAT WAS COMING TO YOU!

?!!*#?#?!?



ALL RIGHT, MEN — WE KNOW WHAR THEY'RE GOIN' — APACHE CREEK! I'LL FIGGER OUT A WAY TUH GIT RID O' THEM SO THERE WON'T BE NUTHIN' LEFT TUH TELL WHO DONE IT! WE AIN'T HAD THUH LAST WORD YET!

A FEW HOURS LATER, NEAR THE VALLEY OF APACHE CREEK.

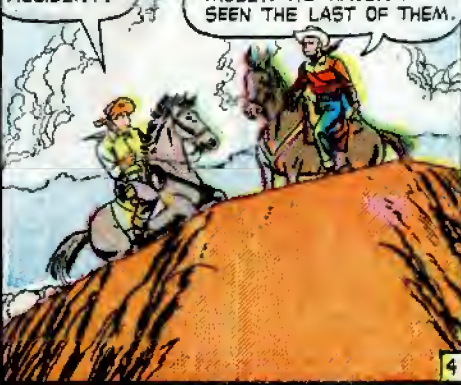
THERE IT IS, POP — APACHE CREEK! AND YOU'RE THE FIRST ONE THERE — IT'S ALL YOURS! I GUESS WE'LL LEAVE YOU NOW.

SO LONG, STEVE BRAND! I GUESS I'LL BE GRATEFUL TUH YUH FER THUH REST O' MY LIFE!



STEVE, I WONDER WHY THEM OWLHOOTS PICKED ON THUH BENSON'S FER THEIR DIRTY WORK — 'CAUSE THEH WHEEL HOOKIN' WUZ NO ACCIDENT!

RIGHT! THERE'S SOME SPECIAL REASON THEY MUST WANT APACHE CREEK FOR THEMSELVES. THEY'LL STRIKE AGAIN, MULEY. WE HAVEN'T SEEN THE LAST OF THEM.



AND WHEN THEY STRIKE — THE DURANGO KID WILL BE READY! WE'LL CUT OFF LAWLESSNESS IN THIS NEW TERRITORY EVEN BEFORE IT GETS A CHANCE TO START!



THE DURANGO KID

THAT NIGHT—STEVE BRAND, NOW **THE DURANGO KID**, PATROLS THE HEIGHTS ABOVE APACHE CREEK VALLEY, ON THE LOOKOUT FOR DIRTY WORK.

SO FAR—ALL IS WELL.



BUT SUDDENLY—A STRANGE AND UNNATURAL THUNDER FILLS THE VALLEY AND SENDS ITS ECHOING ROAR UP THE SLOPES.

THAT ROARING SOUND—WHAT ON EARTH CAN THAT BE? BLAZES! IT SOUNDS LIKE—NO, IT CAN'T BE—BUT...

RUMBLE ROAR



...BUT IT IS! A HERD OF BUFFALO, STAMPEDING DOWN THE VALLEY! GOOD HEAVENS, THE BENSON CAMPSITE IS RIGHT IN THEIR PATH!



I'VE GOT TO CUT IN AND RACE AHEAD. I MUST SAVE POP AND MADGE! RAIDER—IF YOU SHOULD STUMBLE...!



NOW WHUT IN TARNATION?

QUICK! GRAB ON TO ME!



ON, RAIDER—ON! THERE'S A NICHE UP AHEAD—WE'VE GOT TO GET INTO IT BEFORE...!



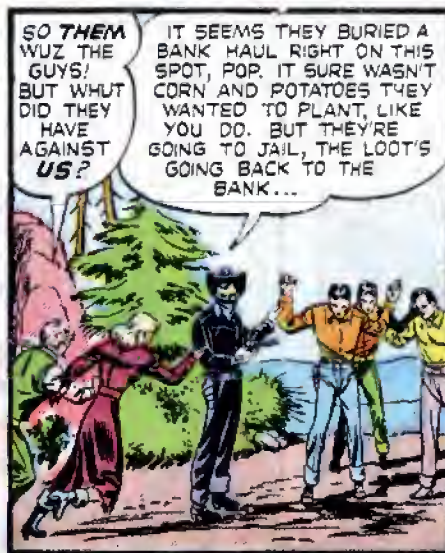
THE DURANGO KID

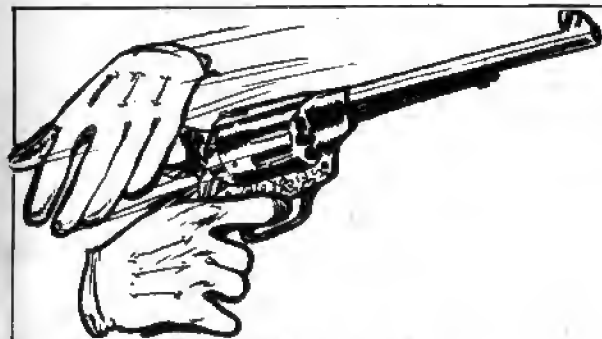


SOMEBODY DELIBERATELY HERDED THOSE BUFFALO INTO THIS VALLEY WITH INTENT TO KILL! AND I THINK I KNOW WHO...!



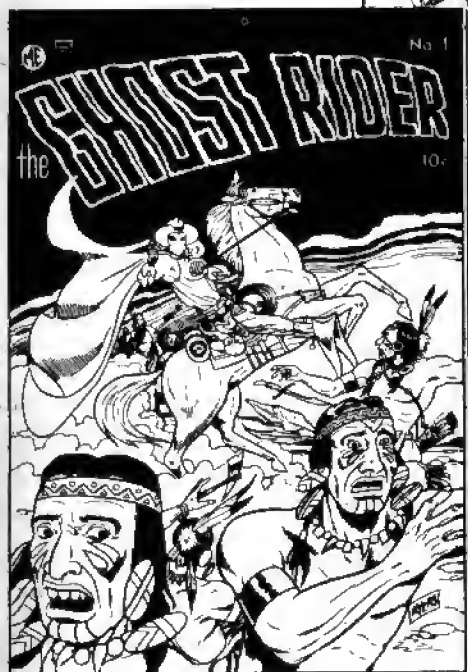
THE DURANGO KID





THE DURANGO KID BEATS MOST TO THE BULLET PUNCH BECAUSE AN EXPERT AT FANNING, TIME IS WHEN YOU PULL THE TRIGGER OF A SIX-GUN BECAUSE THE TRIGGER MUST LEVER BACK THE HAMMER—TO COCK IT—AND THEN THE HAMMER MUST RELEASE AND SNAP DOWN. BUT THE DURANGO KID "FANS" HIS GUN (AS SHOWN HERE) — HITTING THE HAMMER WITH HIS FREE HAND, CAUSING THE WEAPON TO SHOOT INSTANTLY.

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A PIECE OF DIRT

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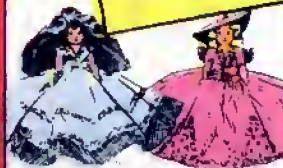
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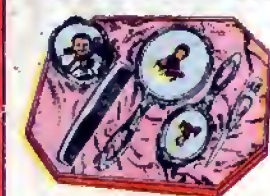
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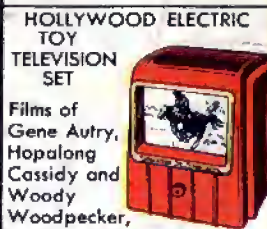
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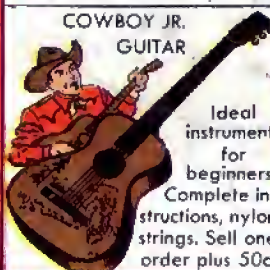
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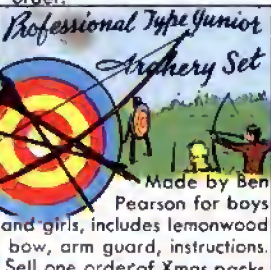
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